



# Grapevine

July 2017

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Store Hours: Mon – Sat, 9 – 9 & Sun, 12 – 6

## My name is Chardonnay: A Look at France and California

**C**hardonnay is one of those grapes that seems to evoke either steadfast loyalty (by many) or stubborn skepticism (by some), the latter usually because people don't realize the grape's versatility. This malleable grape can be made into wines that are oaky, buttery and tropical, or lean, crisp and brimming with apple, and lemon flavors. The most widely planted and diverse white wine grape there is, it is grown throughout the world and is adaptable to a variety of terroir, though it is most notably associated with Burgundy, the land of its origins, and California.

Recent DNA research at UC Davis, California showed Chardonnay to be the product of crossbreeding, centuries ago, between Pinot Noir and Gouais Blanc. According to UC Davis, the grape's name "has been linked to a village in the Mâcon region and is derived from *Cardonnacum*, which means *a place of chardons or thistles*." Depending on where it is grown and the winemaker's hand, it can result in an astounding array of styles. Highly adaptable to a variety of climates and soils, the best expression of Chardonnay is realized in soils with high levels of chalk, limestone and clay — the soil



Cakebread Cellars' Foster Road Vineyard in Carneros.

most prominent in Burgundy; though it can be an outright stunner in California's mix of volcanic lava, fine grain quartz and variety of rocks.

Here are six Chardonnays, three from France's Champagne and Burgundy regions, and three from California — Sonoma, Russian River Valley and Napa.

From the village of Bethon, just south of Epernay in Champagne, **Paul Laurent's NV Blanc de Blancs Brut** is 100% Chardonnay, aged in stainless steel for 18 months. Racy bubbles mingle with a somewhat softer mouthfeel but with all the bracing acidity of a blanc de blancs. It is a stellar opportunity to taste Chardonnay's range. Elegant and pure, it also happens to be a fantastic buy. \$31.99

Burgundy's 2015 vintage was much lauded, and for good reason. A coolish, mild, wet Spring followed by hot

nights in June and July made concentrated wines with finesse — terrific food partners. **Cave de Lugny's 2015 'Les Charmes'** from Macon-Lugny in Southern Burgundy has citrus aromas, a creamy palate and an elegant finish. Aged *sûr lie* in stainless steel with malolactic fermentation, it is a terrific wine. \$13.69

**Louis Jadot's 2015 Pouilly-Fuissé** from Mâconnais in Southern Burgundy sees partial oak aging, lending complexity and structure. It can be cellared five to eight years. **90 W&S** \$22.99

California's Sonoma Coast has cooling ocean breezes, which allows for longer hang time on the vine. The **2015 La Crema** exemplifies climate's effects. Aged for nine months in barrel, it is balanced and fruity, with notes of apricot and a pastry cream finish. **90 WS** \$16.99

**Raeburn's 2015 Chardonnay** from the Russian River Valley is sustainably made and has fresh layers of green apple and pear, with creamy richness from *sûr lie* aging. The name originates from the Olde English phrase *the stream where one drinks*. \$14.49

Grapes for the divine **2014 Cakebread Cellars** from Napa Valley come from the Carneros region. The consistently mild summer that year allowed for even ripening and a balance of concentrated flavors and vibrant acidity. Aging in partial new oak for eight months resulted in a moderate oak presence. *Sûr lie* aging lent a creaminess to the texture. It is aromatic with a tropical palate that finishes with almonds. \$39.99.

A Chardonnay tasting and food and wine pairing with friends in the backyard could be a festive eyeopener to the many beautiful faces of this ethereal grape. Try it! ♦

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**Did you know...**A 1941 census showed that less than 100 acres in California were planted with Chardonnay. Today, it occupies more than 100,000 acres.

## Wine Tastings Fri, 4-7 & Sat, 2-5

Days not mentioned will feature New Arrivals!

Sat 7/1: Fourth of July Wines

Fri 7/7: Italian Wines

Fri 7/14: July Staff Picks

Fri 7/21: **Chardonnay & Pinot Noir:** Chardonnays from the article on page 1 and a couple of Pinot Noirs.

Fri 7/28: 90s Value Wines for a Barbeque

### Chicken Piccata

Adapted from [epicurious.com](http://epicurious.com)

4 skinless boneless chicken breast halves  
3 Tbsp butter, room temperature  
1 ½ Tbsp all purpose flour  
Additional all purpose flour  
2 Tbsp olive oil  
½ cup unoaked Chardonnay  
¼ cup fresh lemon juice  
¼ cup low-salt chicken broth  
¼ cup drained capers  
¼ cup chopped fresh parsley



Place chicken between 2 large sheets of plastic wrap. Using meat pounder or rolling pin, lightly pound chicken to ¼-inch thickness. Sprinkle chicken with salt and pepper. Mix 1 tablespoon butter and 1½ tablespoons flour in small bowl until smooth. Place additional flour in shallow baking dish. Dip chicken into flour to coat; shake off excess.

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in each of 2 heavy large skillet. Add 2 chicken breasts to each skillet and cook until golden and cooked through, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer chicken to platter; tent with foil to keep warm.

Bring wine, lemon juice and broth to boil in 1 skillet over medium-high heat. Whisk in butter-flour mixture and boil until sauce thickens slightly, about 2 minutes. Stir in capers, parsley and remaining 2 tablespoons butter. Season sauce to taste with salt and pepper. Pour sauce over chicken and serve with Sheila's staff pick.

## News & Events

### Celebrating a Sangria-Kissed Summer



Have you seen our Sangria display in the store? It is a party inspiration, complete with recipes to take home. Featuring white, rosé and red wines, they are delicious, without being too sweet.

In June, we had a special Sangria tasting, with pitchers of fruity Sangria and the wines with which they were made. It was a tremendous success, and fun was had by all. If you missed it, stop by the store to check out the display and take home the makings for Sangria, along with the recipes. This is the answer to your next backyard barbeque. Cheers!

### Chardonnay al Fresco

Courtesy of [thekitchenismyplayground.com](http://thekitchenismyplayground.com)

A refreshing cocktail made with the queen of white wines.

#### INGREDIENTS

8 oz Chardonnay  
½ medium cucumber, unpeeled and sliced  
1 lime, juiced  
2 T simple syrup  
ice  
lime and cucumber for garnish

#### DIRECTIONS

Muddle cucumber, lime juice, and simple syrup in a cocktail shaker. Add wine to the shaker; fill with ice. Shake well for about 10 seconds. Strain into two chilled martini glasses, garnish with lime and cucumber, and savor the summer.



## July 2017 Staff Wine Picks

**Sheila: 2015 Sonoma-Cutrer Chardonnay** (Russian River Ranches) **\$18.69** (reg \$21.99) A blend of Chardonnay fruit from six estate vineyards, it is fragrant with pears and white blossoms. Citrus, peach and spice flavors with a creamy mouthfeel make this a balanced, elegant wine. \*Chicken Piccata, see above

**Joe: 2016 Mason Cellars 'Three Pears' Pinot Grigio** (California) **\$8.49** (reg \$9.99) Afternoon winds and moderate temperatures in the Sacramento Delta create bright, perfumed Pinot Grigio fruit. Fresh and delicate with aromas of pears and baked apples, it has a lingering, honey-tinged finish. \*Cucumber-studded Dungeness crab salad

**Max: 2014 Doña Paula Los Cardos Malbec** (Mendoza) **\$8.49** (reg \$9.99) Sustainably grown in sand and clay loam, warm days and cool nights allow the red fruit flavors to develop, a welcome counterpoint to spice and earthy notes. \*Empanadas

**Ian: 2016 Botas de Barro Rueda** (Rueda, SP) **\$10.19** (reg \$11.99) Made from the Verdejo grape, grown in gravelly soils, this clean white is made with natural yeasts, resulting in a fresh and herbaceous wine with striking acidity and plenty of citrus and gooseberry fruit flavors. \*Raw oysters mignonette

**Bill: 2015 Château Paul Mas Clos de Savignac** (Languedoc) **\$14.49** (reg \$16.99) A blend of Grenache, Syrah and Mourvedre, aged 14 months in oak and unfiltered to preserve its velvety, dense texture, it is a complex, aromatic and opulent wine, with rich tannins and dark fruit notes. \*Grilled ribeye